

ICYMI -- FEMA Administrator Unveils New Tribal Strategy Progress Report at National Congress of American Indians Convention

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WASHINGTON -- FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, speaking to more than 2,000 tribal leaders and emergency managers at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) 80th Annual Convention, unveiled FEMA's first of its kind [2023 Tribal Strategy Progress Report](#) and announced the opening of registration for the ninth annual [Tribal Nations Training Week](#), to be held in March 2024.

"We are creating tailored strategies to ensure Tribal Nations have the tools they need to help tribal citizens before, during and after disasters," said Criswell.

Leveraging FEMA's [National Tribal Strategy](#), which re-defined how FEMA can better meet the needs of Tribal Nations, the [Progress Report](#) provides a synopsis of how FEMA has been helping build Tribal Nation capabilities and capacity. These efforts include increasing in-person engagement with Tribal leaders in Indian Country and at FEMA headquarters in a manner that acknowledges tribal sovereignty and educating and improving the FEMA workforce that serves Indian Country.

[In her remarks to NCAI](#), Administrator Criswell affirmed FEMA's commitment to equity and meeting the climate resilience and preparedness needs of all communities. One important aspect of this work is FEMA's update of the Tribal Disaster Declarations Guidance. Upon its creation, the Guidance provided Tribal Nations with the long overdue tribal pathway to request their own Presidential Disaster Declarations. It expedites federal funding and helps Tribal Nations recover from disasters more effectively and efficiently.



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During 2023, FEMA has held nine government-to-government tribal consultations and tribal listening sessions across Indian Country specifically focusing on this critical tribal resource. These sessions, both in-person and virtual, provided FEMA with feedback to rework the Guidance so that it better meets the needs of Tribal Nations. FEMA is also working to update the Tribal Mitigation Planning Policy Guide.

Administrator Criswell also announced the [opening of registration](#) for FEMA's ninth annual Tribal Nations Training Week. The training will be held March 9-16, 2024, at FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama. For nearly a decade, FEMA has provided no-cost, in-person training for tribal leaders, tribal emergency managers, communications, information technology, grants, health care staff and even Indian Health Services staff. In 2023, 215 students from 77 Tribal Nations attended, and FEMA seeks to increase participation for 2024.

The 2023 Tribal Strategy Progress Report and accompanying Fiscal Year 2023 FEMA Tribal Engagement Map are available on the [FEMA Tribal Affairs](#) web page.

